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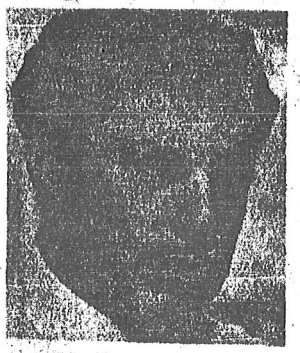

DR. EDWARD FIELDS
Released On $5,000 Bond

Ex-Klan Leader Charged In Burglary

By Merritt Cowart
Marietta Daily Journal Staff Writer

The former head of the New Order Knights of the Ku Klux Klan is out of the Cobb County jail on $5,000 bond after being charged Saturday with burglary at the Marietta home of self-avowed white racist J.B. Stoner, who is in an Alabama prison serving time for bombing a church in Birmingham.

Dr. Edward Fields, 51, who has been ousted as a leader of the National States Rights Party and formed his own NSRP organization, surrendered Saturday at 5:55 p.m. and was charged with burglary, Cobb County Sheriff Bill Hutson said. Fields was released on $5,000 bond posted by his wife, Hutson said.

Some members of Stoner's National State Rights Party dispute Fields' claim that he is the new head of the party, once chaired by Stoner, who resigned last year and named W. Eugene Wilson of Jacksonville, Fla., as head.

Fields is accused of breaking into the National States Rights Party headquarters, which are in Stoner's home on Cherokee Street near Kennestone Hospital, around 10:20 a.m. Saturday and taking a $5,000 addressograph machine, 10,000 addressed file cards, stencils and a .38-caliber pistol, according to the warrant.

The warrant was taken out by Jerry Ray, who is serving as a caretaker of the Stoner property.

The NSRP building served as Stoner's home for 12 years. He is serving a 10-year prison sentence for the 1958 bombing of a black Birmingham church in which no one was injured.

Cobb County Magistrate T.O. Sturdivant issued the warrant for Fields Saturday after two witnesses told authorities they saw two men break into the house and drive away.

Stoner and Fields filed suit in Cobb on May 3 to prevent the anticipated selling of Stoner's house by other NSRP officers. The burglary at Stoner's house came one day after Christian Rights, a subgroup of the original NSRP, filed a $700,000 counterclaim against Stoner and Fields.

The May 3 complaint will be heard July 19 by Cobb Superior Court Judge Grant Brantley.

Christian Rights oversees the land, building and offices of the states rights party and claims it owns the property. The dispute centers on Stoner's and Fields' contention that Christian Rights was not properly incorporated and any action the board may take would be illegal.

Wilson, who is board chairman of Christian Rights, has said the board does not plan to sell Stoner's home.

Fields could not be reached for comment.